National Bamboo Mission (NBM) during 2006-07 for implementation in 28 States including Jharkhand and Orissa. The Mission objective is to promote growth of the bamboo sector through area based regionally differentiated strategies; to increase the coverage of area under bamboo in potential areas with appropriate varieties to enhance yields; to promote marketing of bamboo and bamboo based handicrafts; to generate employment opportunities for skilled and unskilled persons, especially unemployed youths. During 2006-07, an amount of Rs. 75.70 crore has been released. For the year 2007-08, 24 State Annual Action Plans & 19 Research & Development proposals were cleared and an amount of Rs. 114.39 crore has been released for implementation of NBM. During the current year (2008-09), budgetary outlay of Rs. 70.00 crore has been provided, out of which Rs. 57.62 crores has been already released to different States. For harnessing the potential of bamboo, 819 nurseries have been established and an area of 72672 ha. area has been planted with bamboo. Further, 3933 farners and 805 field functionaries have been imparted training for raising bamboo nursery and plantation.

(b) Yes. Bamboo shoot is palatable and used as a nutritive food supplement in many parts of country. The NBM is making efforts to create market within the country and abroad for Bamboo based handicraft products under the marketing component of the Scheme.

(c) Under NBM, processing of bamboo and standardization is not covered. However, the National Mission on Bamboo Applications (NMBA), a mission mode initiative of the Ministry of Science and Technology, promotes bamboo based economic activities like manufacture of bamboo mat boards, bamboo flooring, stick making for blinds & agarbatti, bamboo charcoal etc. with special emphasis on process and product standardization. The products and processes developed and validated meet the laid down standards which helps in promoting economic activities, value addition and employment opportunities in the bamboo sector.

(d) The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture has released an amount of Rs. 329.97 lakh, Rs. 736.72 and Rs. 65.94 lakh for the years 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 respectively under NBM to Orissa. The Action Plan of Orissa lays emphasis on establishing nurseries, undertaking new plantations, improving existing stock, imparting training to farmers and field functionaries, demonstrating technology, organizing seminars/workshops and managing pests and diseases. For Jharkhand, an amount of Rs. 100.00 lakh and Rs. 100.31 lakh have been released during the year 2007-08 and 2008-09 respectively. The action plan of Jharkhand lays emphasis on establishing nurseries, undertaking new plantations, improving existing stock, training field functionaries, demonstrating technology and organizing seminars/workshops.

Agricultural production by use of traditional dung and bio-fertilizers

†1261. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE:
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there will be decrease in level of production than at present, by the use of dung and bio-fertilizers after banning the use of chemical fertilizers for ever;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(b) whether in the present day situation it has not become necessary to lessen the burden of cost of urea on the farmers;

(c) whether by reducing the fertility of land by the use of chemical fertilizers are we not doing injustice with the future generation; and

(d) the details of reduction in agricultural production, debt on farmers and suicides as a result of it, alongwith the details of constitutional requirement to protect the cows and long term planning for economic advancement of the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) The country's level of food production cannot be realized through the use of organic nutrient resources alone. Also, there is no definite scientific evidence of decline in soil fertility due-to use of chemical fertilizers. However, organics and balanced and judicious use of fertilizers, which are being encouraged by the Government through appropriate policy initiatives, helps sustain soil health and higher crop productivity and in reducing the burden of nutrient inputs for the farmers. Use of organic manures and bio-fertilizers also helps in improvement of soil-health on a long-term basis. The National Policy for Farmers, 2007 addressed comprehensively the long term issues in the agriculture and allied sectors including agriculture production, farmers' income and animal husbandry.

Shortfall in production of milk in Kerala

1262. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a shortfall in the production of milk in Kerala compared to the requirement of the State;

(b) if so, whether Central assistance had been given to farmers in dairy sector of Kerala under Capital Venture Fund;

(c) if so, whether above assistance had been limited to non-operational flood area;

(d) if so, the detail including the region of Kerala State covered under above assistance;

(e) whether steps will be taken to extend the above assistance in operational flood area of Kerala since there is a shortfall in milk production;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) Yes, Sir, The Government of Kerala has reported a shortfall of 7.5 lakh liters per day in milk production compared to the requirement of the State.

(b) to (d) Central assistance to the tune of Rs. 293.17 lakh, in the form of interest-free loan has been provided to the State under the Central sector scheme 'Dairy Venture Capital Fund'. Under this scheme, assistance is limited to non-Operation Flood (O.F) areas only in case of establishment of small dairy farm. However, there is no such restriction in case of other components.

(e) to (g) Evaluation and impact study of the scheme is underway to assess need to revise the guidelines.